

RI Department of Environmental Management

Division of Marine Fisheries

PRE-HEARING WORKSHOP

November 13, 2018



Marine Fisheries Informational Workshop – Rules of Engagement

- RIDMF staff will provide presentation on each of the proposed regulation amendments
- **Discussion will ensue upon completion of each presentation;**
- Discussion should focus on:
 - Understanding of the rationale behind each of the proposed amendments;
 - Recommendations of alternatives.
- **IMPORTANT! The workshop discussion is *not* an official public record. Please offer your preferred option(s) and comments for the public hearing record during the public hearing on November 19th**
- **IMPORTANT DATES:**
 - **Public hearing:** February 11, 2019.
 - **Public comment period:** Jan. 18, 2019 – Feb. 17, 2019.
 - **RI Marine Fisheries Council:** March 4, 2019.



Workshop/Public Hearing Items

1. Commercial conch pot tagging program.
2. Bio-medical horseshoe crab harvest in the south shore coastal ponds.
3. Upper Narragansett Bay Trawling Area.



Commercial conch pot tagging program

- Problem: Lack of accountability for the 300 pot limit. Concern that pot limits are being exceeded resulting in overharvest.
- Purpose/rationale of a pot tagging program: Tagging program provides Div. of Law Enforcement with ability to enforce pot limit.



Commercial conch pot tagging program

- Considerations:
 - Extent of problem
 - Administration of program
 - Cost of tags
 - Duration of tag validity (e.g., annual re-issuance?)
 - Develop program similar to lobster pot tagging program?
 - Extra 10% for routine tag/gear loss?
 - Gear rotations tags?
 - Catastrophic tags?
 - Implementation date?



Bio-medical Horseshoe Crab harvest in coastal ponds

- Proposal: Address accountability for bio-medical harvest in coastal ponds.
- Purpose/rationale:
 - Under current regulations, only bait harvest in coastal ponds is prohibited in May; bio-medical harvest allowed.
 - Horseshoe crab population in coastal ponds unknown, but likely smaller than Bay population, which leads to concern for potential over-harvest.
 - Rules require that crabs harvested for bio-medical are returned to the waters from which they were taken after being bled. Currently no accountability that crabs harvested from coastal ponds are being returned to coastal ponds. If not returned to the coastal ponds, then these crabs are not available for bait harvest in coastal ponds in June.



Upper Narr. Bay Trawling Area

Proposal 1: Clarification of timeframe that area is open/closed to trawling.

- Area is open for trawling July 1 through November 1 annually, except on weekends and holidays.
- As written, rule is not clear that area is closed to trawling the remainder of the year from November 2 through June 30.



Upper Narr. Bay Trawling Area

Proposal 2: Correction to description of area.

- Rules reference both “Hog Island Light” and “Hog Island Shoal Light”. Location of “Hog Island Light” is unknown (SW corner of island?). Northern boundary therefore unclear where extends from “Hog Island Light” to the “northern abutment of the Mt. Hope Bridge”.
- Picture of this area as found in repealed reg “Part XVII – Maps” does not include area to northern abutment of bridge. Northern and southern boundaries meet at Hog Island Shoal Light, and does not include any area east of the eastern shore of Hog Island.

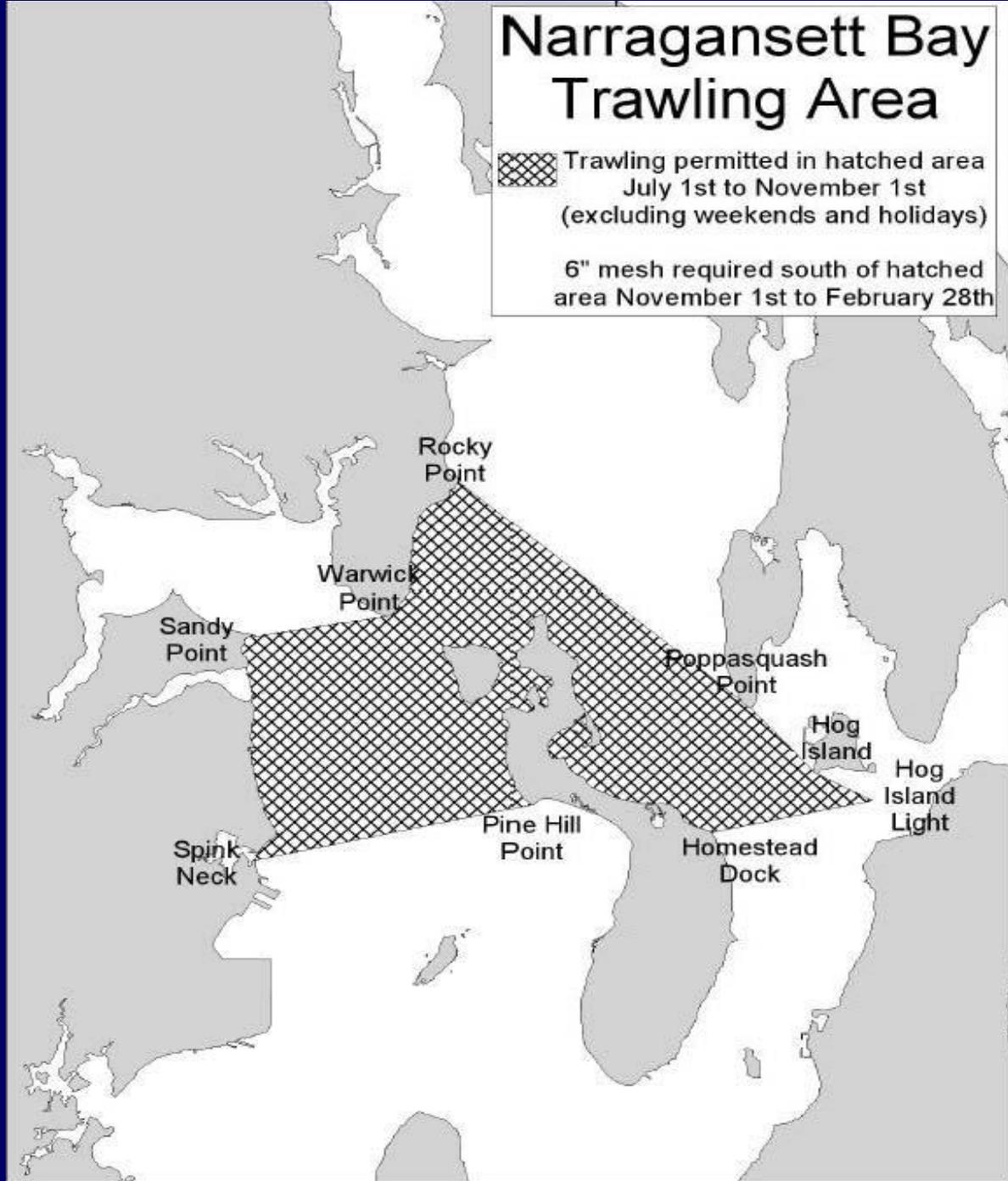


Old map of
Upper Narr.
Bay Trawling
Area (from
repealed reg
“Part XVII -
Maps”)

Narragansett Bay Trawling Area

 Trawling permitted in hatched area
July 1st to November 1st
(excluding weekends and holidays)

6" mesh required south of hatched
area November 1st to February 28th



End of Slides!



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